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Herewith text of question and Secretary's answer on Finland during November 17 news conference:

QUOTE: QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, there has been increased pressure by the Russian government on Finland, and there has been speculation that perhaps the Finnish government might be absorbed into the Warsaw Pact or Soviet bloc, which might result in Sweden joining NATO. Could you give us an assessment of what you think is going on in the Moscow-Finnish situation, and our prospects of Sweden shifting into NATO?

SECRETARY RUSK: I think sir, that it would not be quite, literally, it would not be helpful for me to speculate on that point at the present moment. We have had great respect for the independence as well as the neutrality of Finland. As far as we in the West are concerned, we have not attempted in any way to embarrass Finland's neutrality. The Finnish are a very sturdy people and they have the respect of the American people. My guess is that they will have the strong support of people all over the world, neutral as well as

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well as those who are the so called aligned peoples, in their attempts to maintain their independence and their neutrality in this situation.

UNQUOTE.

Rusk
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